

Nevada Conservation Highlights

CONSERVATION SECURITY PROGRAM ANNOUNCED FOR NEVADA

Ranchers and farmers in selected Nevada watersheds are eligible to participate in a new program designed to reward them for their long-term stewardship.

The Carson Desert, Pine, Walker, and Warner Lakes Watersheds were selected as part of the 2005 Conservation Security Program in Nevada. CSP is a voluntary program that financially rewards land managers who are actively conserving natural resources.

Producers with the majority of their land inside the watershed will be eligible to sign-up for the program in early 2005. Participants will be enrolled in one of three tiers in the program, depending on the extent of the conservation treatment in place on their farm or ranch. Payments will be based in part on this existing conservation treatment as well as their willingness to undertake additional environmental enhancements.

Additional information is online at <http://www.nv.nrcs.usda.gov> or by calling Rod Dahl at (775) 784-5863 ext. 141.

VIGIL SELECTED AS NEVADA STATE CONSERVATIONIST

Richard Vigil has been selected as the state conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Nevada. He started his new assignment on Jan. 24.

"I'm really excited about returning to Nevada and helping implement the conservation programs here," said Vigil. "I am committed to the work we do and making our work more efficient and effective."

Vigil was formerly the deputy state conservationist in Nevada. He has been an engineer on the NRCS's engineering design team in Lakewood, Colo., since April 2004. Vigil received a A.S. degree in engineering technology from Missouri Institute of Technology, a B.S. degree in civil engineering from Brigham Young University, and an Executive Masters in Public Administration from Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. He also took biological science courses at universities in Colo. and Utah. Vigil has held several positions with the NRCS, including Native American Liaison for the NRCS West Region and state hydrologic engineer for the NRCS in Utah.



"Nevada is my home now and I'm here for the long haul," said Vigil. "I have great plans for the NRCS in Nevada and I want to see them accomplished."

A native of Colo., Vigil is a Native American. His father was Southern Ute from Ignacio, Colo., and his mother is Taos Pueblo from Taos, N. M.

Vigil replaces Livia Marqués who transferred to the NRCS National Technology Support Center in Greensboro, N.C.

NEVADA TRIBAL DISTRICT OLDEST IN NATION

The Duck Valley Conservation District was recognized as the nation's oldest Tribal conservation district at the Second National Conference of Tribal Conservation Districts, held in Las Vegas, Nev., in December. The district was established in 1954 and continues to implement a strong conservation program on the Duck Valley Indian Reservation in northern Nevada. Receiving the award are Chairman Rudy Blossom (left) and Supervisor Brian Thomas (right) from Dick Gooby, executive director, Indian National Conservation Alliance (INCA).



AGRICULTURAL LAND PERMANENT EASEMENT PROGRAM ANNOUNCED

Applications to protect Nevada agricultural land from development are now being accepted by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The NRCS received \$1.4 million to implement the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program in Nevada.

"The Farm and Ranchland Protection Program helps ensure that valuable, productive land is protected," said Richard Vigil, NRCS state conservationist. "The funds will be used to purchase conservation easements to limit conversion of farm and ranch lands to non-agricultural uses."

The NRCS will accept FRPP proposals from interested state, tribal and local governments and nongovernmental organizations until April 5, 2005. Last year, two Nevada ranchers protected their land under the FRPP.

For those proposals selected for funding, USDA enters into agreements with nongovernmental organizations, states, federally recognized tribes and local governments to support their efforts to protect soils and historical and archaeological sites. USDA provides up to 50 percent of the appraised fair market value of the conservation easement.

To participate in the program, landowners agree to limit the use of their land for non-agricultural purposes and to develop and implement a conservation plan. The farm or ranch land must contain productive soils or historic or archaeological sites and be: part of a pending offer from a nongovernmental organization, state, tribe or local farmland protection program; privately owned; covered by a conservation plan; large enough to sustain agricultural production; accessible to markets for what the land produces; and surrounded by parcels of land that can support long-term agricultural production.

Interested landowners should contact Bill Daily, FRPP program coordinator, at (775) 784-5863 or their local office of the NRCS. More information, including the Request for Proposals, is on the Web at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/frpp>.

Nevada Centennial Ranch and Farm Program

The Nevada NRCS is a proud sponsor of the Nevada Centennial Ranch and Farm Program. This program recognizes long-standing families whose ranches and farms that have remained in the same family for 100 or more years.

To qualify as a Centennial Ranch or Farm, the ranch or farm must have belonged to your family for at least 100 years, and must be a working ranch or farm with a minimum of 160 acres, OR if less than 160 acres, must have gross yearly sales of at least \$1,000. To qualify for the additional Historic Structures Award, a ranch or farm must have four (4) buildings or structures that are more than 50 years of age and have not been significantly altered.

For more information, contact any office of the NRCS, Nevada State Historic Preservation, Nevada Department of Agriculture, Nevada Cattlemen's, or Nevada Farm Bureau, or visit the web site at nvshpo.org.

DEADLINE NEARS FOR RANCHER AWARD NOMINATIONS

It has been said that cattlemen are the original stewards of the land. In fact, nothing could be closer to the truth. Cattlemen consistently identify proper land stewardship as one of their most important callings. They hold a deep love of the land, and, of course, their long-term livelihood depends upon grassland.

Environmental Stewardship Award winners are prime examples of how environmental management benefits both the cattlemen's bottom line and the resources in their care. Established in 1991 by Dow AgroSciences, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, the program provides an opportunity for the beef industry to showcase the stewardship and business practices that exist together on progressive farms and ranches. The goal of the Environmental Stewardship Award Program is to acknowledge producers who go the extra mile when it comes to preserving and enhancing the resources on their land. While the program highlights industry stewardship, it also provides cattlemen with examples and ideas which may be useful on their own farms and ranching operations.

Please take the time to nominate a producer. Applications are due March 5, 2005. Forms are available from any of the sponsors or by visiting the ESAP web site at <http://hill.beef.org/esap>.

Nominations are due March 4, 2005.



Environmental Stewardship Award Winner
Receives This Beautiful Bronze Statue